



VIEWS from the Hill



Sheriff Frank G. Cousins, Jr.

Vol. 14, No. 10

The Official Newsletter of the Essex County Sheriff's Office

January 1—April 1, 2008

In This Issue...

Superior Snouts	Pg. 1
Anniversaries	Pg. 2
Enrollment	Pg. 2
Need Story	Pg. 2
TRAC	Pg. 3
For the Children	Pg. 4
Timekeeping	Pg. 5
Policy Statement	Pg. 6
EAP	Pg. 7
Deferred Comp	Pg. 7
Sheriff's Message	Pg. 8

SUPERIOR SNOUTS

The olfactory senses of “Buddy” the chocolate Labrador, “Nitro” the German Shepherd, and “Mako” the Belgian Malamois, are anything but average.

Along with being able to ascertain the cut of a particular piece of meat sizzling on a grill a number of yards away from where they are penned, the pooches can also determine the scents for crack, marijuana, cocaine, hash, black tar heroin, crystal methamphetamine and ecstasy stashed in hard-to-find places.

The dogs, which are the partners of Lieutenant Joanne Caron, Officer Stephen Pomerleau and Sergeant Anthony Palmisano, recently enhanced their narcotic detection skills by participating in a five-week course at the Boston K-9 Police Academy. By completing the class, they are now certified to hunt for drugs, inside or outside the sheriff's department.



Lieutenant Joanne Caron, Officer Stephen Pomerleau, and Sergeant Anthony Palmisano with their “partners.”

Lt. Caron said the school, conducted by Boston Police K-9 Instructor Troy Caisey, is a good one.

“Your dog is your partner and you need to watch them so you can learn their body language,” she said. “They teach us to look for scent recognition from the dogs, which is a change in the dog's body language.”

One of the main drills used to train the dogs consists of placing the scent of a particular drug into a rolled up towel. The towel will then be hidden in a room, vehicle, etc. Once the dog finds the towel, the dog's handler will allow his or her partner to wrestle with the towel.

“They start with scented towels for the dogs as a positive award. They want to do a self-reward,” Lt. Caron said.

There were seven other K-9 teams in the class, which ran from January 2 through February 8. Training searches were conducted throughout the state.

“We went to Auburn, New Bedford, Worcester. You have to have buildings all over the place so the dogs don't get comfortable,” Officer Pomerleau said.

Lt. Caron said it was interesting watching “Buddy,” “Nitro,” and “Mako” at work.

“My dog's passive. Anthony and Stephen's are active. They scratch when they make an indication,” she said.

**Anniversaries****January 1, 2008 through April 1, 2008****10 Years:**

Susan Kern
Debra Nunez
Jeffrey Maguire
Carl Cox
Jason Faro
Jamie Forcino
Christopher Fusco
Everette Hopper
Stephen Pomerleau
Peter Waldman
Edward Zins
Gina McGinnes
Kevin Nolan
Thomas Kelley
Brian Lavoie
Paul Perkins

15 Years:

David Cammarata
Stephen Cicco
Peter Cignetti
Brian Ferraro
Jeffrey Howell
James LaRosa
Barbara Smith
Mark Chaklos
Thomas Douglas
Frank Garrison
Richard Hopkins
Ronald LeBlanc
Byron Locke
George Durant
Joseph Halloran, Jr.
Steven Martin
James McCarthy
Patrick Ryan

20 Years:

Valerie D'Entremont
Joseph Forzese

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Annual Enrollment

Annual enrollment, which will take place April 14 through May 16 for changes that will take effect July 1, 2008, gives you the opportunity to review your benefit selections and make changes if you desire, or to enroll in benefits if you are eligible for medical insurance.

See your *Benefit Decision Guide*, which will be mailed to you in April, for any important changes. Active employees will receive their guide at their agency or municipality office. Retirees and survivors will receive their guide at home.

If you want to keep your current *Group Insurance Commission* medical selection, you do not need to fill out any paperwork. Your coverage will continue automatically. During annual enrollment, we encourage you to take the opportunity to think about what you and your family need in the way of health care and other benefits. Once you choose a health plan, you cannot change plans until the next annual enrollment, or unless you move out of your health plan's service area.

Scheduled Holiday Observances**(YEAR 2008 - Leap Year)**

New Year's Day	Tuesday, Jan 1
M.L. King, Jr. Day	Monday, Jan 21
Presidents' Day.....	Monday, Feb 18
Memorial Day	Monday, May 26
Independence Day	Friday, July 4
Labor Day	Monday, Sept 1
Columbus Day	Monday, Oct 13
Veterans' Day	Tuesday, Nov 11
Thanksgiving	Thursday, Nov 27
Christmas	Thursday, Dec 25

* Holidays will be observed the work day following or preceding you legal days off.



TRAC

What was once known as **SATCO** at the Middleton House of Correction – **Substance Abuse Treatment Community for Offenders** – is now known as – **TRAC – Treatment and Recovery of Addiction in Corrections.**

The housing unit, located at the Middleton Jail, which deals with offenders who abuse drugs and alcohol, was renamed in January, when Sheriff Frank G. Cousins, Jr. made the decision to implement a modified therapeutic community for the unit that houses 80 offenders.

“We brought in ADCARE. They have a best-practice model in Barnstable County,” Deputy Superintendent for Programs Joseph Ouellette said. “There will be more groups. And actual accountability will be on the inmates for group participation.”

ADCARE is a company used by the Essex County Sheriff’s Department that dispenses counseling to offenders who abuse drugs and alcohol.

The renaming of the SATCO unit was conducted through a contest overseen by Deputy Ouellette, who said there were 30 nominations. Ace counselor Ollie Wise offered the winning selection.

“We brought in ADCARE. They have a best-practice model in Barnstable County,” Deputy Superintendent for Programs Joseph Ouellette said. “There will be more groups. And actual accountability will be on the inmates for group participation.”

“We put a poster up and stated the person with the winning name picked by the sheriff would get a \$25 gift certificate to Dunkin’ Donuts. It was a team effort,” said Deputy Ouellette.

The new treatment facility, Deputy Ouellette said, is nothing like SATCO.

“(The offenders themselves) will be active participants in the structure of the program,” he said. “Guys are going to be accountable.”



FOR THE CHILDREN

He is the one guy who says, “It’s going to be the best ever,” and for the most part, always comes through.

Assistant Director of Training/Director of the Youth Academy John O’Connor is determined to make the 2008 Essex County Sheriff’s Department’s Youth Academy the best one yet.

What are the changes he has in store?

Well, the age for the oldest participants is being increased to 15. The youngest will still be 12. There will be kayaking on the ocean. And one of the days will feature a tour of Boston on the Duck Boats. That’s right. Duck Boat tours.

“We’ll learn the history of Boston this year. We did the Salem Witch Trials in the past,” Deputy O’Connor said.

Academically, teaching the youngsters about the deleterious effects of drug and alcohol use and learning to manage anger top the class syllabus.



Assistant Director of Training John O’Connor and a class of happy campers.

“I’m also looking for a really good community service project,” adds Deputy O’Connor.

Historically, graduation day for students has taken place on the front lawn of Essex Aggie in the form of a cookout, K-9 demonstration and the awarding of certificates of completion.

This year, graduation day, which is always on a Friday at the conclusion of every week, will take place at the Salem Willows. Department employees are always welcome to attend the graduation day festivities. (If you need directions to get to the Salem Willows, please contact Deputy O’Connor at Ext. 3315.)



TIME KEEPING

For the last several weeks the department has been installing new biometric time clocks at all its facilities to make it easier to tabulate the hours employees work when they report for their shifts.

The clocks operate through a finger-scanning process.

Here is how they work:

- You step up to the clock and punch in your state employee identification number on the keypad.
- You place your left or right index finger over the scanning area. The display screen will read, “accepted” or “declined.”
- If the information is accepted, you can proceed to your post. If it is declined, you must repeat the process.

Deputy Superintendent for Operations David McCoy said the new system should make life a lot easier for everyone, particularly those people involved in scheduling and anyone wishing to keep track of their time and vacation schedules.

As part of the new system, the vacation and work schedules of each employee will now be kept in an electronic file that employees will be able to access via the department’s computers.

“(Because of the new system everyone) can go into a control room in housing, or up to a unit manager, and check their time, scheduling, etc,” he said. “They don’t have to go through everything anymore.”

Matt Pszenny, Scheduling Manager, said the new system would prove to be a godsend in time.

“(Ultimately) we will have uniformity relative to payroll, scheduling, etc.,” he said.





Civil Rights Policy Statement

The Essex County Sheriff's Department has been in existence for over 300 years. Today, its employees are among the finest public servants, committed to ensuring that every taxpayer, inmate and co-worker is treated with fairness, equality, and respect.

As Sheriff, I am firmly committed to ensuring that this Department comply with civil rights and equal employment opportunity for everyone regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital or family status, political beliefs, parental status, or protected genetic information.

There is no principle more important. We must comply with every aspect of the Commonwealth's and the Nation's civil rights laws. To do otherwise is simply not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

As public servants, we cannot be effective without being fair. We cannot be responsive without being respectful. We cannot deliver programs and services without being sensitive to the human issues that are so much a part of our work.

Our adherence to these principles also requires a swift, reasonable, and credible process for addressing and remedying deficiencies. It must also include consistent education and outreach to ensure civil rights are protected, our laws are enforced, and discrimination in any form is prevented.

This must be our passion and our vision. We must continue to strive for a workplace and society that are inclusive and respectful of differences, while working toward unity and harmony. Our actions must always speak louder than words.

With your help and commitment, and using our collective best efforts across every level of the Department, we can reach new heights. Together, we can create a better workplace for all employees, and a Department that delivers programs and services to all people fairly and with integrity and equality.

I look forward to fulfilling this vision - our goals - together.

Frank G. Cousins, Jr.
Sheriff
Essex County



Employee Assistance Program

The ultimate goal of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is the recovery of valued employees. It is hoped that the Program will be instrumental in changing traditional attitudes and behavior toward troubled employees. Consequently, the employee will be encouraged to seek help *early* enough to maintain his/her position as a productive employee. It is important to point out that this Program is also offered in response to current Collective Bargaining Agreements between the Sheriff's Department and the bargaining units.

The EAP Coordinator for the Department is *Ms. Judith B. Boardman*, a long time care provider with *Health and Education Services, Inc.* Salem, Massachusetts. Ms. Boardman's role with the Sheriff's Department is to serve as an advisor to senior management. She is also responsible for the development of the EAP on an organizational level and to address the interests of both management and the employees. Ms. Boardman can be reached by calling (978) 745-2440

Deferred Compensation Plan

As of March 7, Great-West Retirement Services is the new provider for the Massachusetts Deferred Compensation SMART Plan. As the new provider, Great-West is responsible for all administrative, recordkeeping, communication and investment education services for the Plan

What this means for employees is:

- A reduction in administrative fees for participants with an account balance. The reduction equates to 0.0875 percent of plan assets a year, charged at a rate of 0.021875 percent per quarter. When compared to the current annual fee of 0.12 percent of plan assets, this amounts to a reduction of about 25 percent in administrative fees.
- Enhanced online access to account information. This includes the ability to personalize your account home page. Visit www.mass-smart.com > **Account Access** and click the "Personalize My Page" link for instructions.
- You will be able to increase or decrease your contribution amount via the SMART Plan Service Center automated voice response system or through the Web site.



Sheriff's Message

Teach everyone to do everything so there is never any breakdown in the management structure of the operation. While that is not a novel concept in private industry or the military, within governmental "cross-training"



Sheriff Frank G. Cousins, Jr.

is a practice that tends to be overlooked within bureaucracies, particularly when employees are more interested in maintaining, or protecting, their turf.

It is something we need to do more of, which is why I was gratified to learn recently that Training Department Director David Wentzell is using this "step-up" approach with his staff.

When the next academy class reports for its first day of instruction in April, Assistant Training Director Christine Fishken will serve as the head administrator, while Michael McAuliffe, who normally serves in that function, will take on the role of Christine's No. 2.

Director Wentzell's rationale for the move is simple.

"We figure we'll give her a shot," he says. "We're trying to establish a structure where everyone is familiar with what the other person does."

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All opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the writers and are not intended to reflect policy or the opinions of management of this Department.

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It is this Department's policy to seek and employ the best qualified personnel in all of its facilities and to provide equal opportunity for the advancement of its employees, including promotional opportunities and training; and to administer these activities in a manner which does not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, age, national origin, disability, or veteran status.

That is a great attitude, and one that all of us needs to share, regardless of what we do.